SURAH OF E-SHAMS

THE RESEARCH:
SURAH OF ASH-SHAMS

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THE REFERENCES

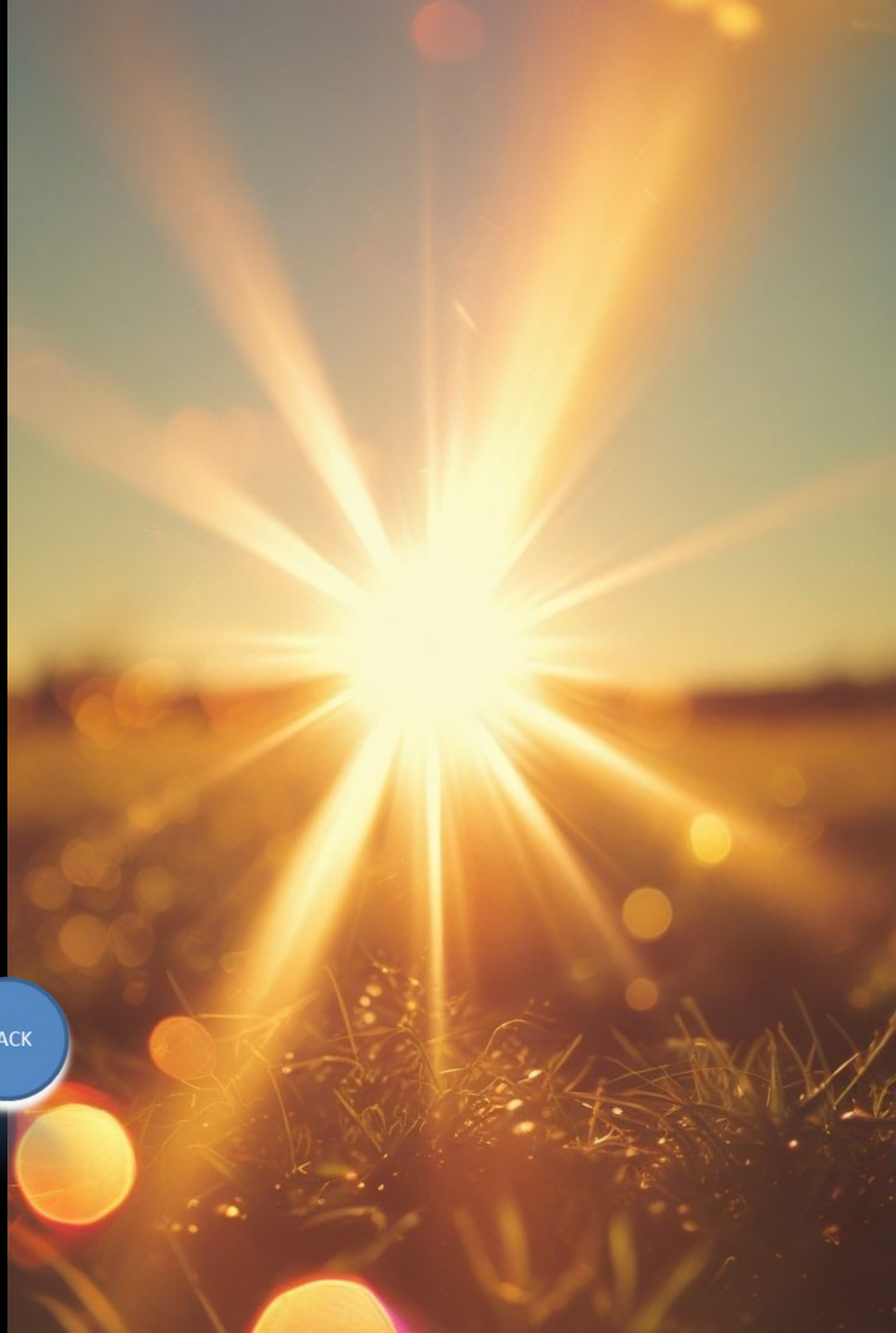
1) https://iqra-quran.com/chapters-of-quran/91-ash-shams/

2) https://quran.com/ash-sh

THE BACKGROUND 1

Its Name

- Surah Name: Ash-Shams (سـورة الـشمس)
- Translation: The Sun
- Origin of name: The surah is named "Ash-Shams" after the first word in the opening verse, which means “the sun.”



BACK

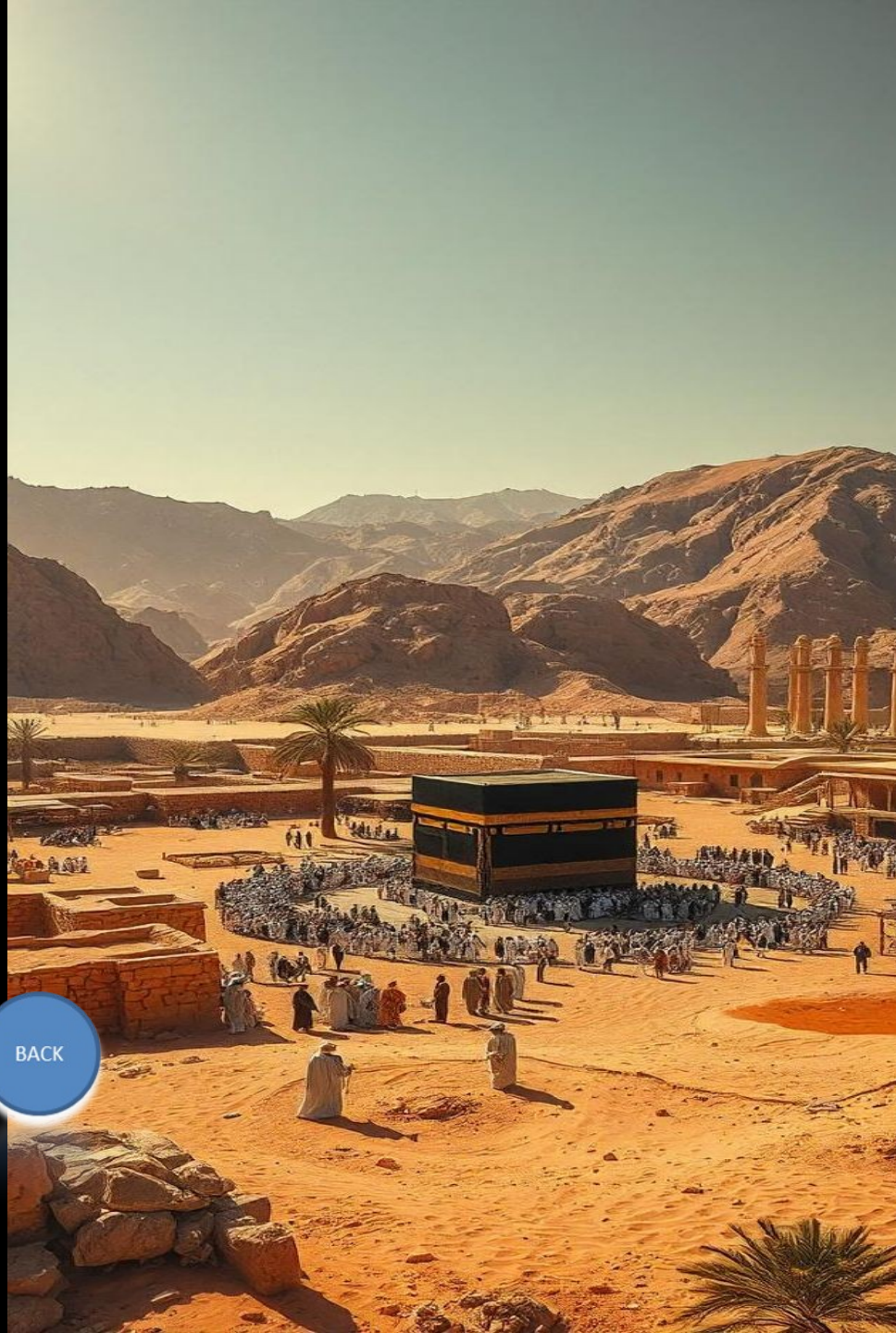
Revelation Period

- Makki or Madani: Makki
- Approximate Time of Revelation: Around the 5th year of Prophethood

BACK

Historical Context

- Surah Ash-Shams was revealed during the early Makkan period, around the fifth year of the Prophet Muhammad’s (pbuh) mission. This was a time when the Muslim community was still small and faced growing opposition from the Quraysh. Islam was spreading quietly, mostly among the poor and youth, while the influential leaders of Makkah mocked and resisted the message.



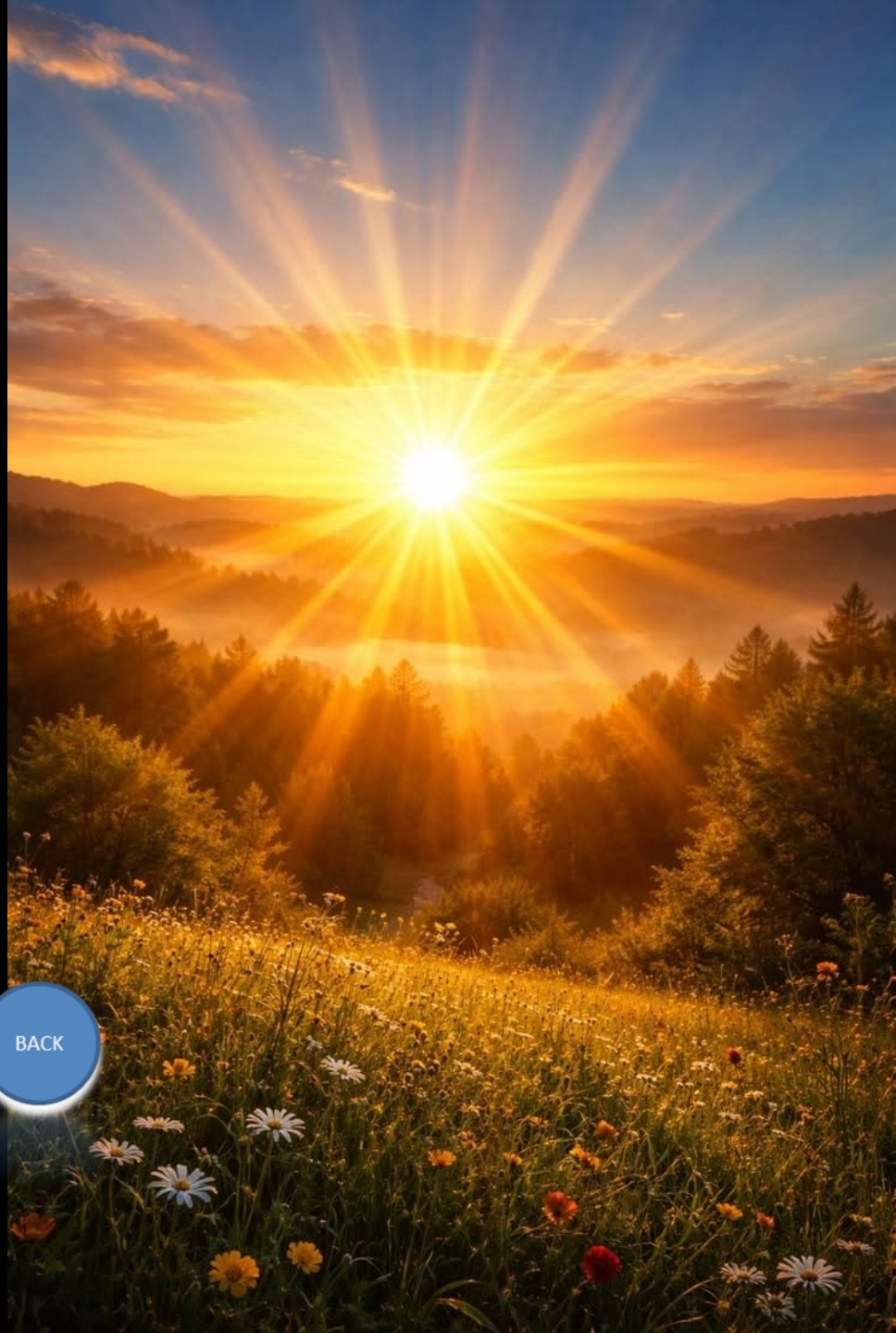
- Although the physical persecution had not yet reached its peak, psychological pressure, ridicule, and social rejection were widespread. The Quraysh were very proud of their traditions and resisted any changes to the status quo, especially those challenging idol worship and tribal authority.

BACK

- The reference to the people of Thamud and their rejection of the prophet Salih served as a warning to the Quraysh. The earlier nation had also ignored divine guidance and suffered destruction as a result. This parable mirrored the attitude of the Quraysh leaders, who were similarly rejecting Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

BACK

- This surah uses cosmic signs—sun, moon, day, night—as oaths to capture attention and highlight the greatness of the Creator. These natural phenomena were familiar to the Arabian audience, who relied on them in their desert environment. The Makkan society was also known for their poetic expressions. The rhythmic and expressive style of Surah Ash-Shams fits well within that cultural context, making its message not only powerful in meaning but also compelling in its sound and form.



- During the Medinan period, Mu'adh ibn Jabal used to lead prayers in the mosque of his neighborhood and would recite long surahs after Al-Fatiha. This became burdensome for some of the companions, so when the matter was brought to the Prophet’s attention, he instructed Mu'adh to recite shorter surahs such as At-Tariq, Ash-Shams, and Al-Layl instead. [1]

BACK

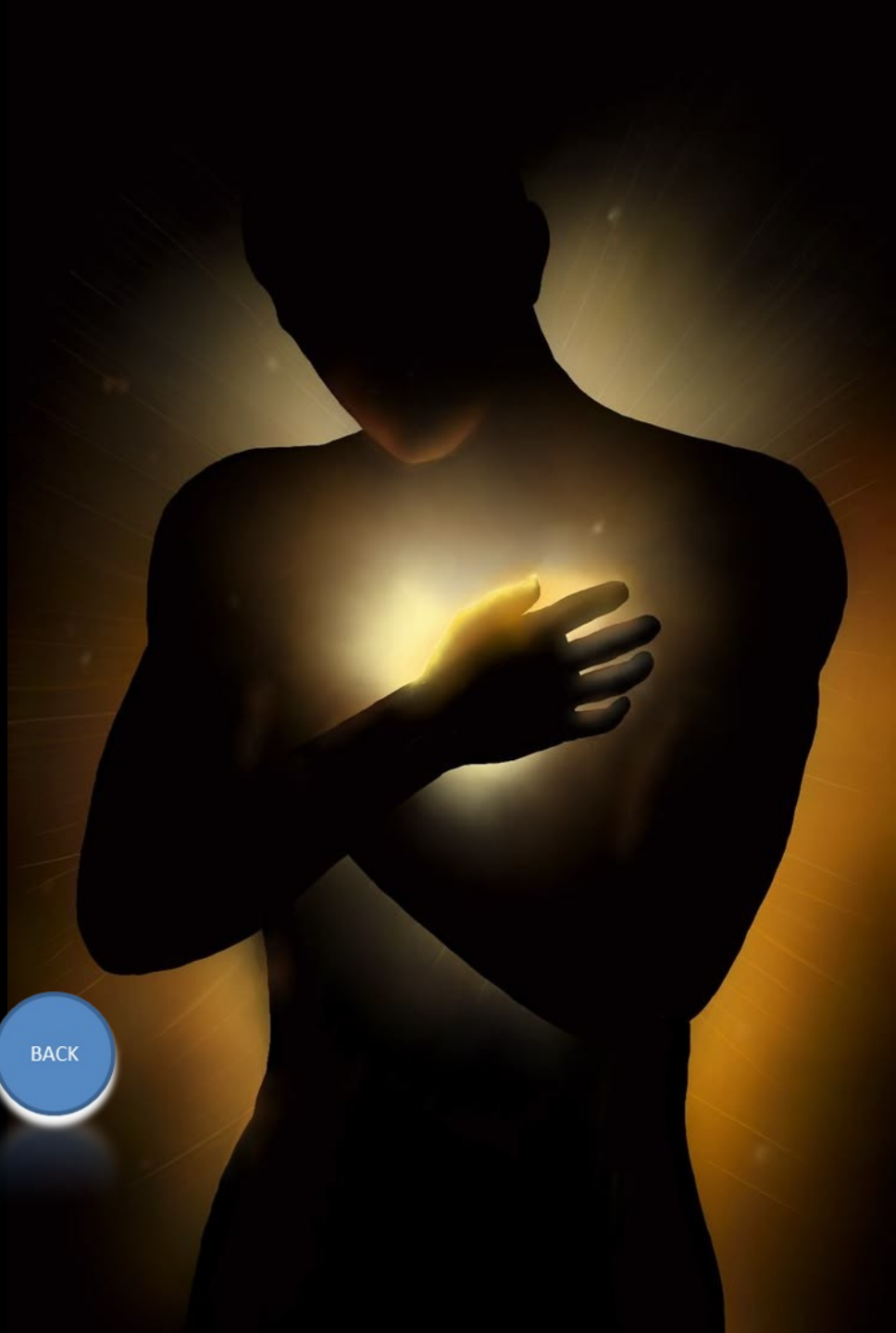
Main Topics

- **Oaths Emphasizing the Importance of the Soul:**

The surah begins with a series of eleven oaths by natural elements like the sun, moon, day, night, sky, earth, and the human soul. These oaths draw attention to the greatness of creation and prepare the reader for a powerful message about human responsibility and morality.

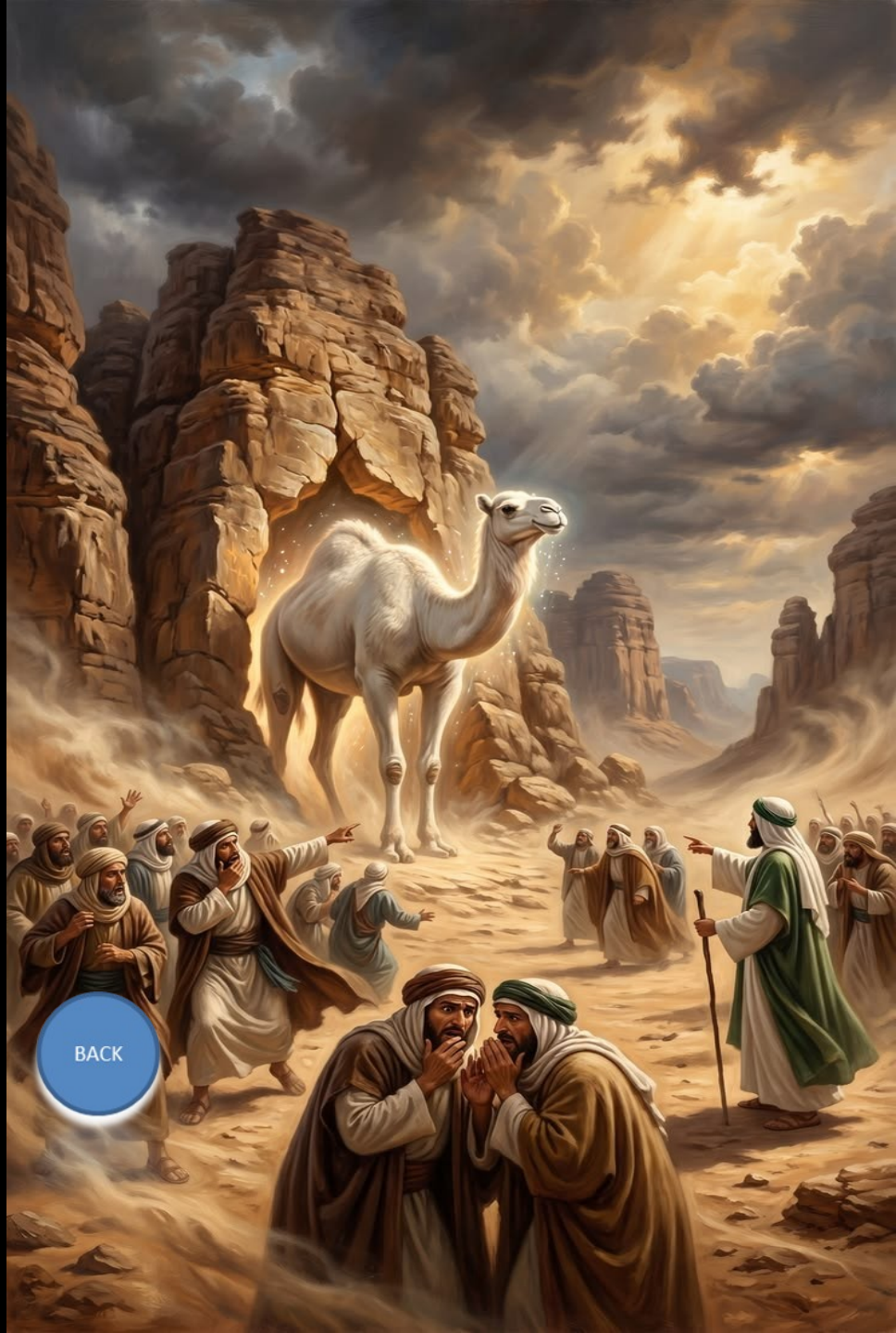
- The Purity or Corruption of the Soul:

Allah created the human soul with the ability to do both good and evil. Success comes to those who purify their souls through righteousness, while failure and ruin come to those who let their souls fall into sin and evil.



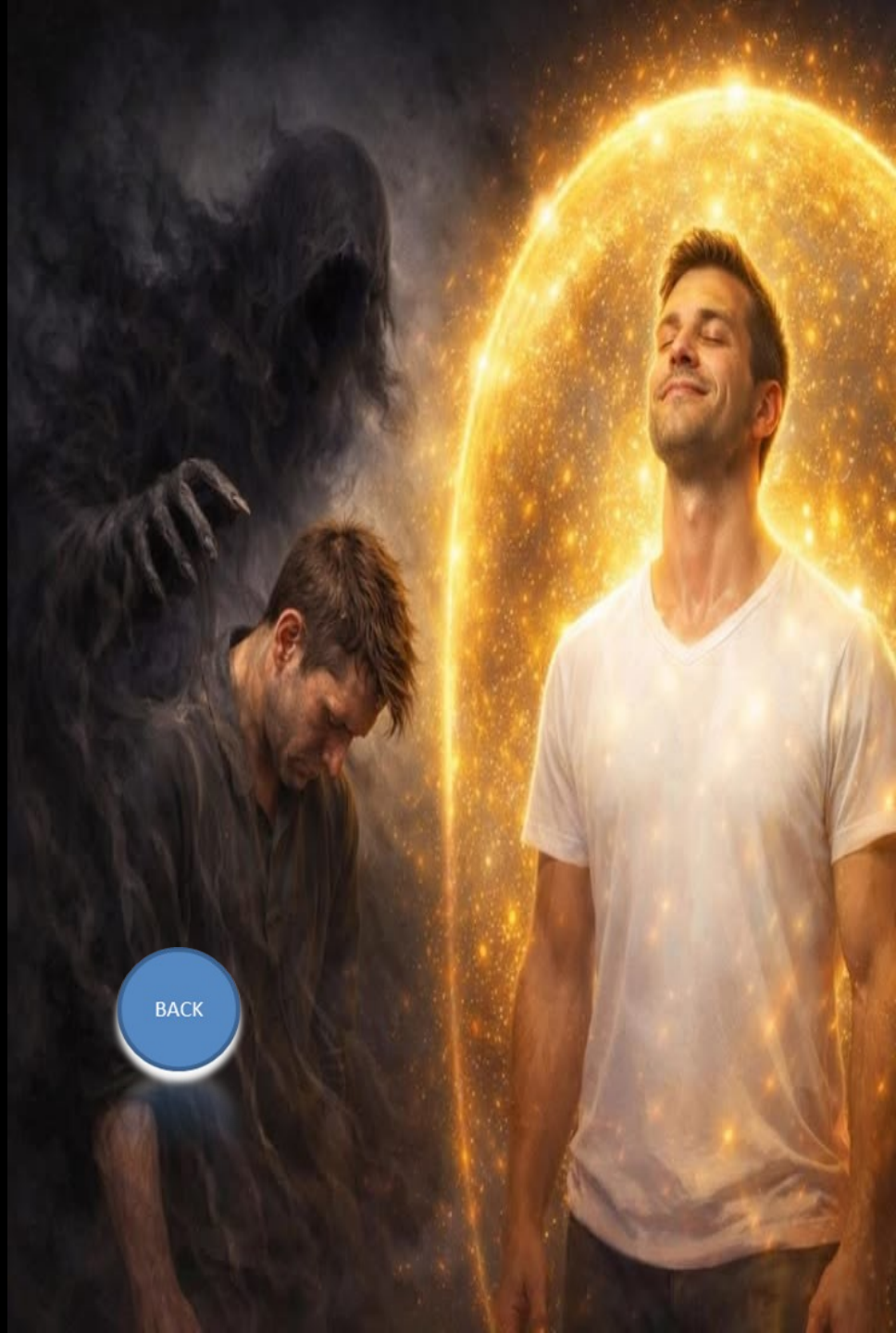
- Warning Through the Story of the Thamud People:

The surah gives an example from the past —the people of Thamud. They rejected the prophet Salih and killed the she-camel sent as a miracle. As a result, they were destroyed by a terrible punishment. This story serves as a warning to those who deny truth and reject guidance.



Key Lessons

- Allah swears by many signs in creation to show their importance and to grab our attention.
- Success comes from purifying the soul and choosing righteousness.
- Failure and ruin come from ignoring the good and following evil desires.



THE AYAT IN DETAILS 2

وَٱلشَّمۡسِ وَضُحَىٰهَا ١

By the sun and its brightness,

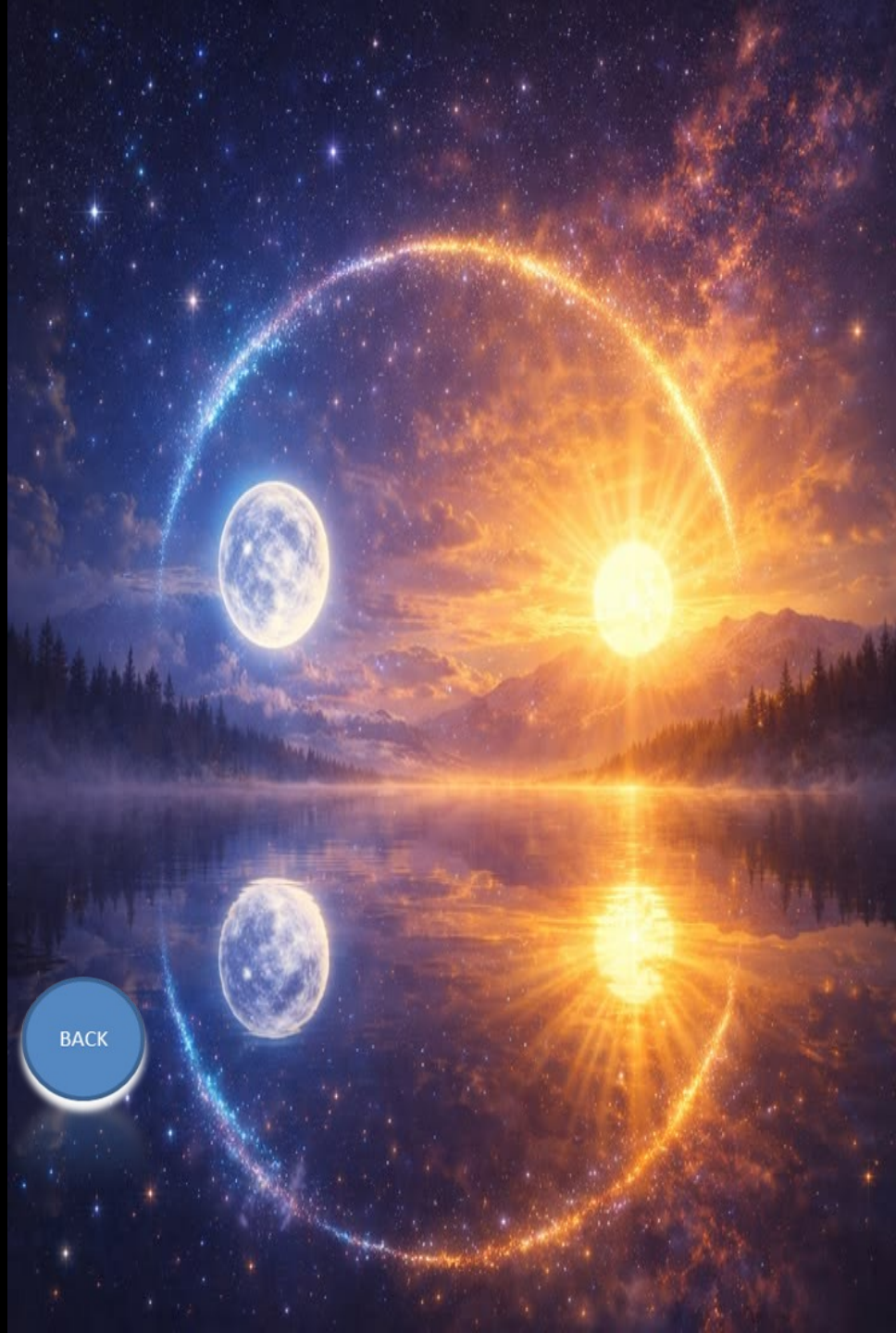
BACK

وَٱلۡقَمَرِ إِذَا تَلَىٰهَا ٢

and the moon
as it follows it,1

Footnote - 1

Or “… when it reflects the sun’s light.”



وَٱلشَّمۡسِ وَضُحَىٰهَا ۝١ وَٱلۡقَمَرِ إِذَا تَلَىٰهَا ۝٢ وَٱلنَّهَارِ إِذَا جَلَّىٰهَا
۝٣ وَٱلَّيۡلِ إِذَا يَغۡشَىٰهَا ۝٤ وَٱلسَّمَآءِ وَمَا بَنَىٰهَا ۝٥ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ

and the day
as it unveils it,

وَٱلَّيۡلِ إِذَا يَغۡشَىٰهَا ٤

and the night as it conceals it!

BACK

وَٱلسَّمَآءِ وَمَا بَنَىٰهَا ۝٥

And by heaven and the One Who built it,

BACK

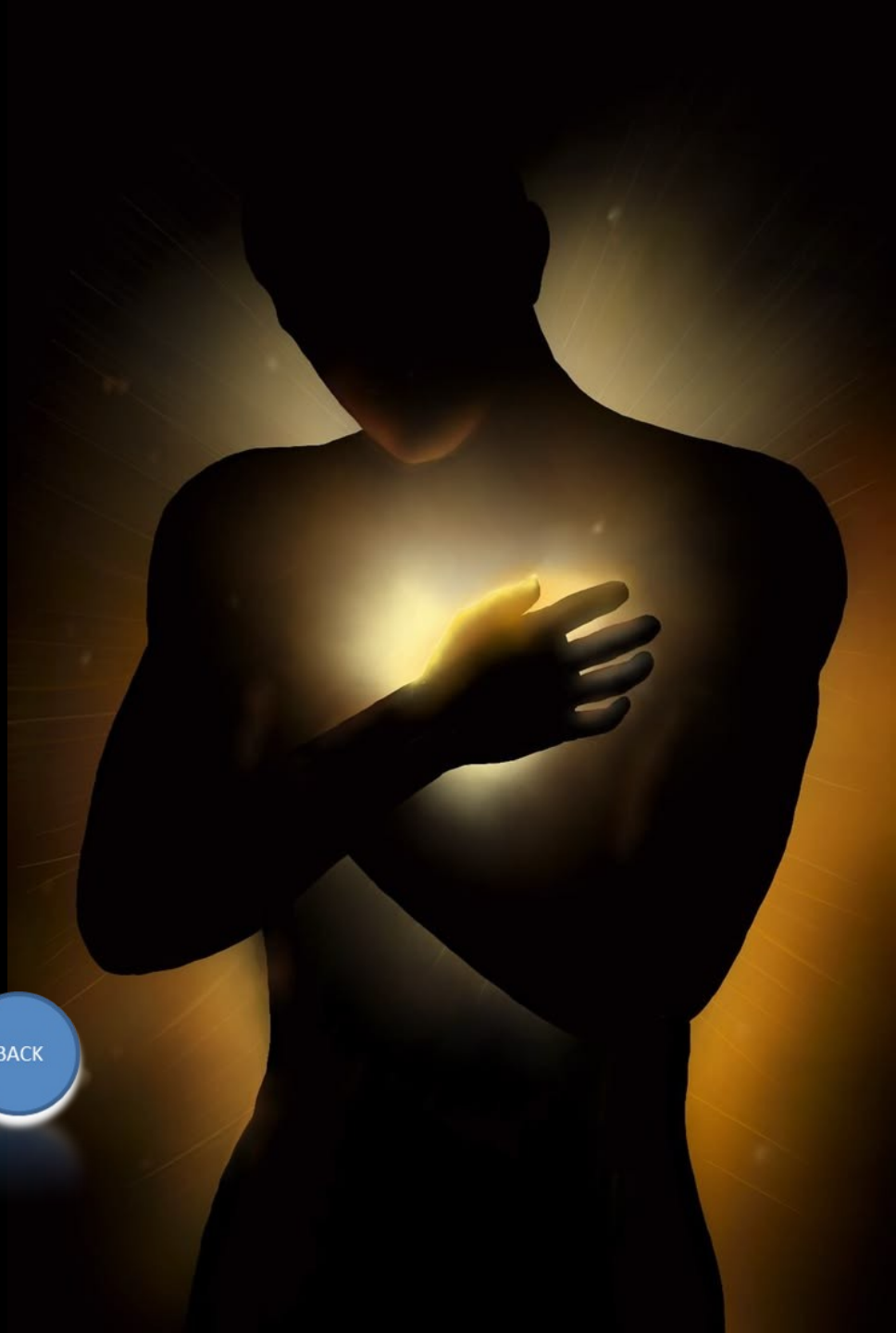
﴿٣﴾ وَٱلَّيۡلِ إِذَا يَغۡشَىٰهَا ﴿٤﴾ وَٱلسَّمَآءِ وَمَا بَنَىٰهَا ﴿٥﴾ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ
وَمَا طَحَىٰهَا ﴿٦﴾ وَنَفۡسٖ وَمَا سَوَّىٰهَا ﴿٧﴾ فَأَلۡهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا

and the earth
and the One
Who spread it!

BACK

وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّىٰهَا ﴿٧﴾

And by the soul and the One Who fashioned it,



BACK

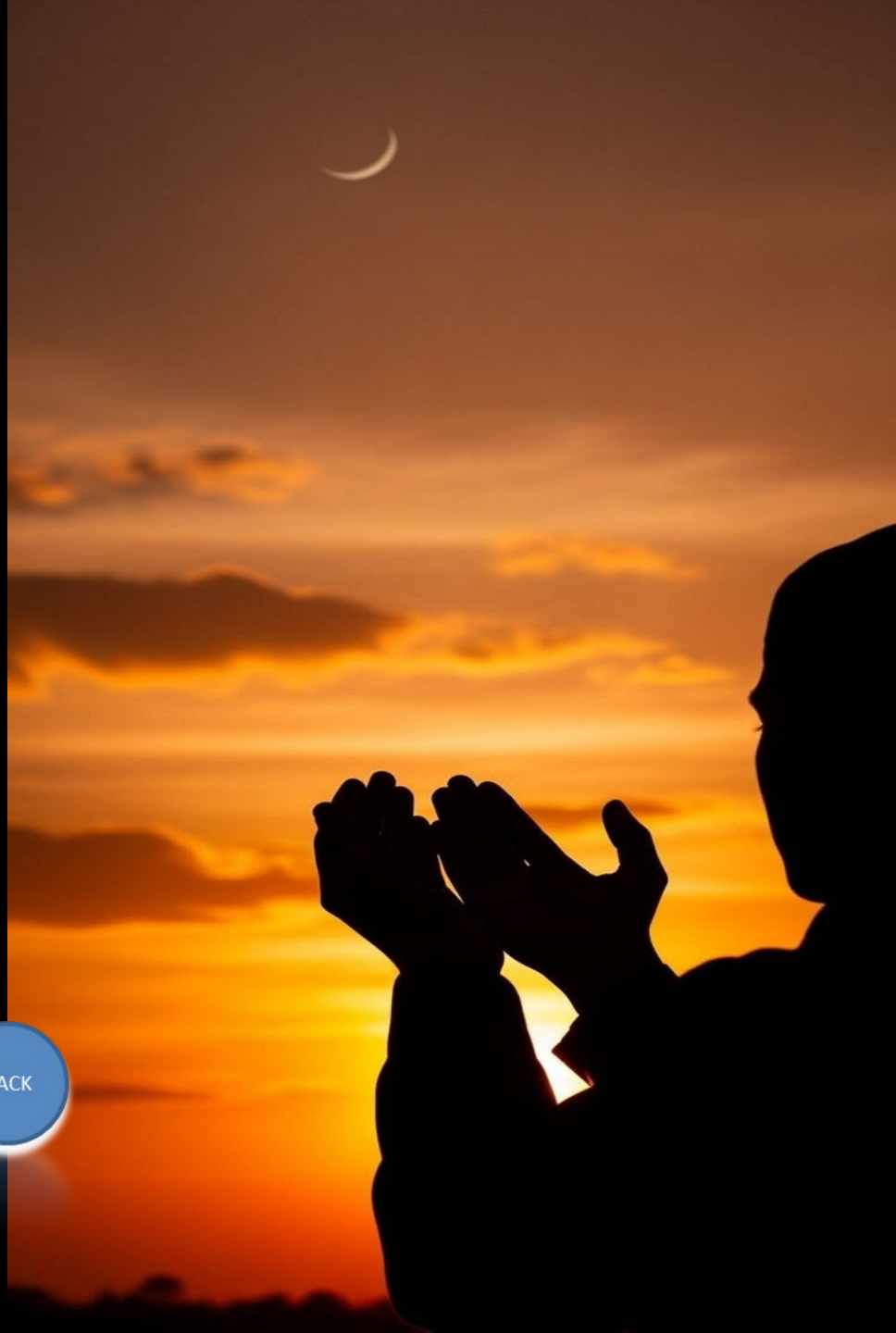
وَمَا طَحَىٰهَا ﴿٦﴾ وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّىٰهَا ﴿٧﴾ فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا
وَتَقْوَىٰهَا ﴿٨﴾ قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن زَكَّىٰهَا ﴿٩﴾ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَن دَسَّىٰهَا

then with the knowledge of right and wrong inspired it!

BACK

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن زَكَّىٰهَا ٩

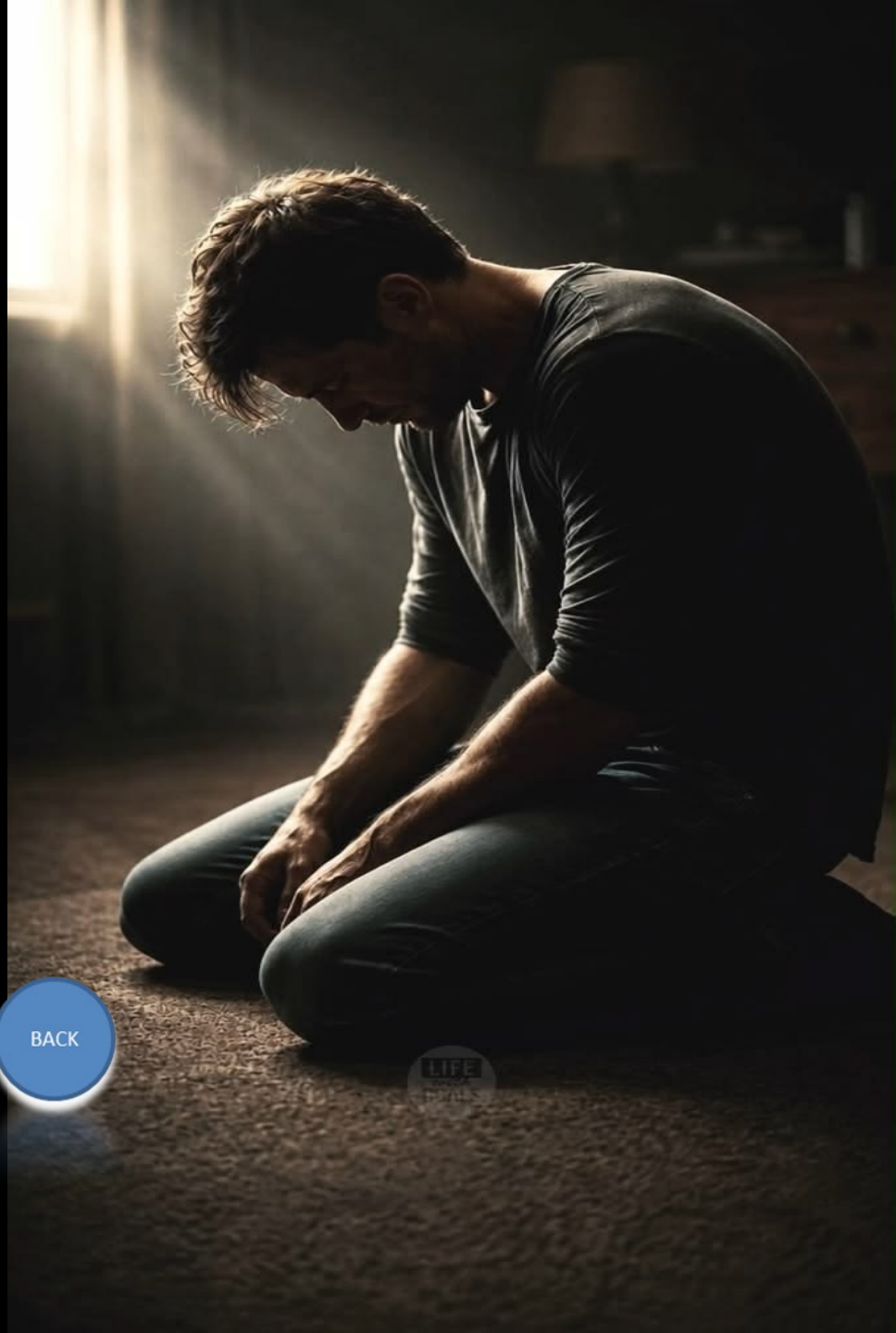
Successful indeed is the one who purifies their soul,



BACK

وَتَقْوَىٰهَا ﴿٨﴾ قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن زَكَّىٰهَا ﴿٩﴾ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَن دَسَّىٰهَا
﴿١٠﴾ كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ بِطَغْوَىٰهَآ ﴿١١﴾ إِذِ ٱنۢبَعَثَ أَشْقَىٰهَا ﴿١٢﴾ فَقَالَ لَهُمْ

and doomed is the one who corrupts it!



كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ بِطَغْوَىٰهَآ ﴿١١﴾

Thamûd rejected the truth out of arrogance,

BACK

إِذِ ٱنۢبَعَثَ أَشۡقَىٰهَا ﴿١٢﴾

when the most wicked of them was roused to kill the she-camel.

كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ بِطَغْوَىٰهَآ ﴿١١﴾ إِذِ ٱنۢبَعَثَ أَشْقَىٰهَا ﴿١٢﴾ فَقَالَ لَهُمْ
رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ نَاقَةَ ٱللَّهِ وَسُقْيَٰهَا ﴿١٣﴾ فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَعَقَرُوهَا فَدَمْدَمَ

But the messenger of Allah warned them, “Do not disturb Allah’s camel and her turn to drink!”

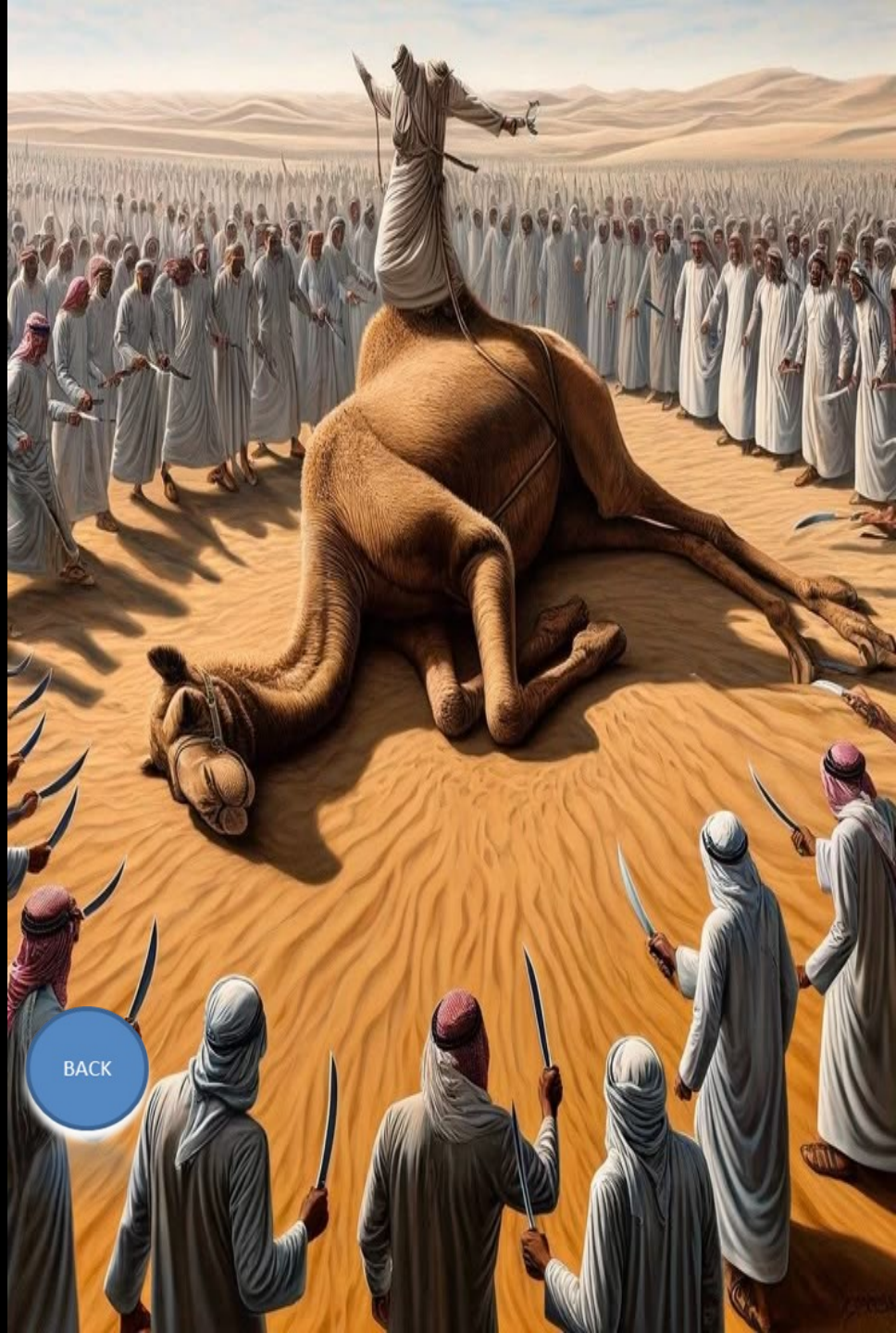
BACK

رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ نَاقَةَ ٱللَّهِ وَسُقۡيَٰهَا ١٣ فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَعَقَرُوهَا فَدَمۡدَمَ
عَلَيۡهِمۡ رَبُّهُم بِذَنۢبِهِمۡ فَسَوَّىٰهَا ١٤ وَلَا يَخَافُ عُقۡبَٰهَا ١٥

Still they defied him and slaughtered her. So their Lord crushed them for their crime, levelling all to the ground.1

Footnote - 1

It is true that while Qudâr ibn Sâlif was the individual who killed the camel, the rest of the people were supportive of what he did, so they were all punished collectively.



وَلَا يَخَافُ عُقْبَٰهَا ﴿١٥﴾

He has no fear
of
consequences.

EXCERCISES
BACK

1. Rememberi ng (Recall)

1) What are the main elements Allah swears by at the beginning of the surah?
2) How many oaths are mentioned before the central message?
3) Which nation is mentioned as an example in the surah?
4) Who was the prophet sent to the people of Thamud?
5) What happened to the she-camel mentioned in the surah?

2. Understanding (Comprehension)

1) What is the relationship between the sun and the moon as described in the surah?
2) What does “purifying the soul” mean in your own words?
3) Why does Allah mention natural phenomena (sun, moon, sky, earth)?
4) Explain the outcome of those who corrupt their souls.
5) What lesson can be learned from the story of Thamud?

3. Applying

1) How can a person purify their soul in daily life?
2) Give examples of actions that might corrupt the soul.
3) How can the story of Thamud guide someone's behavior today?
4) In what ways can you reflect on Allah's creation as mentioned in the surah?
5) How can this surah influence your decision-making?

4. Analyzing

1) Why are multiple oaths used before stating the main message?
2) Compare the concepts of "purification" and "corruption" of the soul.
3) What is the connection between the natural signs and the human soul?
4) Analyze the behavior of Thamud—what led to their destruction?
5) How does the structure of the surah build toward its central idea?

5. Evaluating

1) Why is purification of the soul considered the key to success?
2) Do you think people today pay enough attention to their inner selves?Why or why not?
3) Was the punishment of Thamud justified based on their actions?
4) Which is more difficult: purifying the soul or avoiding corruption? Explain.
5) How relevant are the lessons of this surah in modern life?

6. Creating (Higher-Order Thinking)

1) Write a short reflection on how this surah can change a person’s life.
2) Create a daily plan to help purify the soul based on the surah.
3) Design a mind map connecting the oaths to the main message.
4) Write a short story showing the consequences of ignoring inner purity.
5) Compose a short speech encouraging others to reflect on this surah.

و الحمد لله رب العالمين